

House Bill 625

By: Representatives Jamieson of the 28th and Oliver of the 83rd

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

To provide findings of the General Assembly; to amend Subpart 2 of Part 6 of Article 6 of Chapter 2 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to conditions of employment of certificated personnel, so as to provide for a 10 percent increase in state salary for certain nationally certified school psychologists, school social workers, and school counselors; to provide for additional qualifications; to provide for terms and conditions; to provide different terms and conditions for such school psychologists, school social workers, and school counselors who become nationally certified on and after a specified date; to provide for an annual roster of persons eligible for the salary increase; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

SECTION 1.

The General Assembly finds that:

(1) The process for certification by the National School Psychology Certification Board requires:

(A) Earning a six-year degree or 60 hours of graduate courses;

(B) Passing the PRAXIS II exam in school psychology;

(C) Completion of a portfolio documenting qualifications for the certification; and

(D) Completion of 1,200 hours of internship;

(2) The process for certification by the National Association of Social Workers requires:

(A) Earning a master's degree in social work;

(B) Two years' work in a school setting;

(C) Certification or licensure by the state in school social work;

(D) Documentation and recommendation by a supervisor who is a certified school social worker; and

(E) Passing the American Social Work Board exam; and

(3) The process for certification by the National Board for Certified Counselors requires:

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- 1 (A) Earning a master's degree;
- 2 (B) Certification or licensure by the state as a school counselor;
- 3 (C) Completion of three years' work as a school counselor, including 3,000 hours of
- 4 counseling students;
- 5 (D) Documentation of qualifications for certification; and
- 6 (E) Passing the National Certified School Counselor Exam.

7 **SECTION 2.**

8 Subpart 2 of Part 6 of Article 6 of Chapter 2 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia
9 Annotated, relating to conditions of employment of certificated personnel, is amended by
10 inserting a new Code section to be designated Code Section 20-2-212.5 to read as follows:
11 "20-2-212.5.

12 (a) As used in this Code section, the term:

13 (1) 'High-needs school' means a Georgia public school that has received an unacceptable
14 rating for a period of two or more consecutive years.

15 (2) 'National certification' means certification as a Nationally Certified School
16 Psychologist from the National School Psychology Certification Board, as a Certified
17 School Social Work Specialist by the National Association of Social Workers, or as a
18 National Certified School Counselor by the National Board for Certified Counselors.

19 (b) For initial national certification prior to July 1, 2006, and subsequent renewals anytime
20 thereafter, any person who:

21 (1) Has completed three years of satisfactory performance as a school psychologist,
22 school social worker, or school counselor in a public school system in the state;

23 (2) Holds a valid Georgia certificate as a school psychologist, school social worker, or
24 school counselor; and

25 (3) Has received national certification

26 shall receive not less than a 10 percent rate increase in state salary at the commencement
27 of the 2006-2007 school year. The increase in state salary provided by this subsection shall
28 be in addition to any other increase for which the person is eligible. The 10 percent increase
29 shall be computed based on the state salary for such individual when national certification
30 is received and recomputed each subsequent year based on the individual's state salary for
31 that school year.

32 (c) Any person who was enrolled in the process, as determined by the Professional
33 Standards Commission, of attaining national certification on or before December 31, 2004,
34 and who obtains initial certification and subsequent renewals after July 1, 2006, shall be
35 eligible for salary increases pursuant to subsection (b) of this Code section if such person
36 otherwise meets the requirements of subsection (b) of this Code section.

(d) For initial national certification on and after July 1, 2006, and subsequent renewals anytime thereafter, any person who:

(1) Is currently serving in a high-needs school as a school psychologist, school social worker, or school counselor, and holds a valid Georgia certificate as a school psychologist, school social worker, or school counselor, as defined by the Professional Standards Commission; and

(2) Has received national certification

shall receive not less than a 10 percent rate increase in state salary for each year he or she holds national certification. Such increase shall be awarded beginning on the date such certification is received. The 10 percent increase shall be computed based on the state salary for such individual when national certification is received. A school psychologist, school social worker, or school counselor who transfers to a high-needs school after such individual receives national certification shall receive such increase beginning on the effective date of transfer if the school psychologist, school social worker, or school counselor meets the requirements of this subsection, and such increase shall be computed based on the state salary for such individual on the effective date of the transfer. Provided that such individual remains employed in a high-needs school or in a school that was designated as a high-needs school at the time the individual received national certification or transferred to such school and otherwise continues to meet the requirements of this subsection, the 10 percent increase shall be recomputed each subsequent year based on such individual's state salary for that school year. The increase in state salary provided by this subsection shall be in addition to any other increase for which the person is eligible.

(e) The Professional Standards Commission shall provide annually to the Department of Education a roster of school psychologists, school social workers, and school counselors who have attained and retained national certification and are eligible for the annual increase provided for by subsections (b) and (d) of this Code section."

SECTION 3.

All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.